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# MORALITY OR IMMORTALITY?

BY

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"A King's Penknife or Why I Am Opposed to  
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# MORALITY OR IMMORTALITY?

*A Sermon Preached in the First Baptist Church  
New York City*

By the Pastor, I. M. HALDEMAN, D.D.

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Did our Lord Jesus Christ come into the world to make men moral or immortal?

I shall answer this question from a basic text to be found in Saint Paul's Second Epistle to Timothy, First Chapter, ninth and tenth verses:

"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,

"But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."

Around this text I shall group several others: (1 Peter 3:18; 1 Corinthians 15:3, 4; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 10:5; Hebrews 9:22; John 3:36; Jude 13.)

Together these read:

"Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust; that he might bring us to God."

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;



"And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures."

"He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

"Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me."

"Without shedding of blood is no remission."

"He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

"Wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever."

According to the popular concept, our Lord Jesus Christ came into the world to do good, heal the sick, comfort the sorrowing, set a good example of morality, of strict righteousness, and live a life of thoughtful reverence for, and sincere devotion to, the unseen God.

Christianity, it is held, consists in following this example. Like Christ, people are to go about doing good, visiting the sick, looking after the poor and needy, being kindly and cleanly spoken, gentle-mannered and full of brightness and cheer for other lives. In short, a life of perpendicular honesty and unquestioned morality, owning and having reverence for God as the supreme Being, but a God altogether bigger and broader than the limited tribal God of Israel, not the Jehovah of a small and comparatively insignificant nation, but a God who, by whatever name He may be called, is, in final terms, the Father of all men.

Such with more or less modifications is the kind of



Christianity the advanced preacher is preaching. And this is the kind of Christianity, equally more or less modified, the average Christian is trying to practice, or, at least, holds theoretically.

There are those who do not belong to Church, who make no profession of Christ or Christianity, who are doing all the things Christians are supposed to do. They are kind, benevolent, helpful, more or less cultured and refined. They live a clean life, are respected and honored by their fellow men. They are generous, contributing largely to all good things; and measuring themselves by the advanced concept of Christianity, are confident they are as good as any Christian may be, as acceptable to the Most High, and just as secure both for time and eternity.

This attitude of non-Church members and non-Christian moralists is the logical consequent of that preaching and teaching which makes salvation by character; character produced by the evolution and culture of the innate goodness of the natural man.

"Be good, do good and follow the example of Jesus as He lived on earth. Live up to your light." Such, in sum, is modern theology—if not Christianity.

Take that concept and bring it under the reach and test of the basic text.

"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,

"But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."

Mark the sweep of that text!

It goes back of the six days' remaking of the earth recorded in the second and succeeding verses of the first chapter of Genesis, across the unreckoned space between the second and first verses to that moment when the earth fell from its original state and became a formless chaos. It takes us from thence over an unmeasured expanse, whether of years, or ages, or flowing tide of eternity, to the fiat utterance which caused the earth to find its place amidst the congeries of worlds we so briefly call "the heavens"; back beyond the "beginning" into the realm where no beginning is, into the movement of the something we name as "the purpose" of God; from thence looking down the line of its revelation and unfolding we see it involves the creation of the universe, the setting up of the earth as the arena of redemption, the creation and foreseen fall of man, the incarnation, the cross, the resurrection and ascension of Christ and all succeeding history general and particular to that moment when the individual professed the name of Christ and took his relation among men as a Christian.

Do you think all this involvement of divine wisdom and planned omnipotence was necessary to make us moral, fairly decent with one another in this life, and then permit us to wither with sickness, disease or old age and passing out leave behind us the record of an ephemeral life in which the longest days were often those of perplexity, sorrow and, sometimes, of bitterest despair? Were all the resources of Godhead called upon and taxed; the issues of sin, of holiness, of justice and the judgment of God set up; His law, His love, His mercy and His wrath

revealed; the horror, the hell, the unspeakable anguish of the cross, the torture of the body and torment of soul endured, just to keep us from lying, cheating or in any way living an unclean or immoral life? Does such an outcome measure up to this immensity of purpose and potency; or, does it seem foolish, childish and triflingly picayune?

Take the modern concept and place it under the test of another text:

“For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.”

Let this text grasp you and carry you over the back-swept centuries till you stand in the midst of the multitude looking up at the central of three crosses.

Let the word “suffer” intensify your vision till you see every detail of the monstrous event. The head bare and crowned with a crown of twisted thorns. The pitiless, cloudless sky burning into the brain and the spines of the thorn crown stabbing the white, unwrinkled brow till it seems written over in crimson hieroglyphs of throbbing agony. The extended and partly raised hands sending their streams of blood down the arms, winding round the chest, gliding down the flanks, along the strained and stiffening limbs, mingling with the blood blackly oozing from the pierced feet and pooling at last on the barren ground which seems like thirsty lips to revel in the red-dening tide. Listen to the beating of the heart as it tries to force the blood through swelling veins and dammed-up arteries. Listen to the thunder of the heart as it beats in His ears and as He hears it. Draw close enough to see how His lips are parched and that His breath burns Him

as He breathes like the palpitating rush of blasting flame from white-heated and suddenly opened furnace doors.

He suffered! He suffered physically as no man before or since could suffer.

He so suffered because He was the sensory nerve of the universe.

In Him were concentrated all the forces of nature. Not a wind that blew, not a thunder of wave upon the shore, not a movement in the wide, infinite domain that was not registered in that body in which dwelt all the fulness of the very Godhead.

But His physical suffering was only a prelude.

His supreme suffering was in the soul.

He was suffering the wrath of God. The wrath of God is the essential antagonism of His holiness to sin.

The wrath of God came upon Him as when the billows of the deep rise, gather themselves together and fall as a smashing, merciless flood.

In that hour the God in Him smote the humanity in Him. His humanity was deserted and swept from the fellowship of His deity.

The deity in Him detested all that His humanity represented, saw it as such, shrank back from it in horror as though it were actual and very sin.

He was forsaken of God in Him. (He did not say He was forsaken of the Father.)

His deity seemed to depart from Him, His humanity seemed smitten and alone.

He was as one who is accursed, outlawed of God and wholly undone.

He cried out :

“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”

It was as though in some moment of unspeakable anguish you should cry out :

“My mind, my reason, my will, my mental perceptions, all that is best in me has forsaken me.”

It was as though one part of you had turned against the other part of you, and as if that other part of you felt itself despised, helpless, innocent, hopeless, whelmed in the thick blackness of smothering despair.

There is no speech that will describe it.

It is beyond comparison.

There is nothing to which it may be likened.

There are no terms to define it; all vocabulary becomes bankrupt that tries it.

It is a depth where human gaze has never penetrated.

It is without a parallel.

He suffered !

We say that and go along with the physical picture of it and then suddenly we are face to face with the suffering that wrenched the awful cry from His human lips.

And all this ! What for ?

Will you say He went through it, was ordained to go through it from all eternity ; that the earth was created, built and hung in its present orbit, that He might suffer the agony of the cross just to induce us by the spectacle of it to be good and genteel in the hurrying years of our mortal life ?

Was that, think you, the purpose for which from all eternity God ordained that His Son should become incar-



nate and die the death of an accursed and forsaken criminal?

Take another text and put such an interpretation of the cross and the purpose behind it, the interpretation which makes Christianity at its best, to be good, moral and helpful to one another in this life, and test it by what that text teaches :

"I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures ;

"And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures."

The phrase, "according to the scriptures," is the key to a double meaning.

It signifies, primarily, "according to (the *prophecy* of) the scriptures," the Old Testament Scriptures. It is the affirmation that everything foretold of Christ in these Scriptures from the hour of His birth to the moment of His burial were completely, exactly, and to the most minute detail absolutely fulfilled.

But the phrase signifies much more.

It means Christ died "according to (the *doctrine* of) the scriptures."

The doctrine of the Old Testament Scriptures set forth upon almost every page in typical and open declaration is, that approach to a holy God can be made only on the ground of sacrificial and atoning blood. In announcing that doctrine the Apostle affirms Christ died in fulfillment of it; that in His death He was the pre-ordained victim, the Lamb of God, the vicarious and atoning sacrifice; that only by and through Him when offered by faith

as a sacrifice and claimed as a substitute could the sinner draw nigh unto God, find acceptance with Him and be saved.

What the Apostle here describes in Corinthians he testifies in Hebrews and shows that the Son of God Himself corroborated it when He came into the world; as it is written :

“Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me :

“In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.” (That is, they did not meet the case, did not take away sin, satisfy God and save the sinner.)

Because of this failure of animal sacrifices the Lord offered His own specially prepared body, and did so according to the eternal will; as it is written :

“By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”

The Apostle then draws attention to the fact that after our Lord Jesus Christ had offered one sacrifice, He sat down at the right hand of God. He did this in contrast to the high priest in Israel who took the blood into the most holy place and sprinkled it on the Mercy Seat; but, could not sit down, must stand while he sprinkled it and then go out immediately from the divine presence. Our Lord Jesus Christ sits in the Most Holy place in Heaven itself and upon the throne of which the Mercy Seat was the symbol; sits there as the living witness that His sacrificial death does not have to be repeated, is complete, once for all, efficient and wholly sufficient; wherefore it is written :



"By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." (Not sanctified by any merit or effort of their own; but, "by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.")

And now what will you say?

Will you say these multiplied offerings in Israel, all these bloody sacrifices, were typical and prophetic of the death of our Lord Jesus Christ on the cross; that they were continually crying out and announcing that He, the eternal Son of God, the "firstling" in Heaven, must become incarnate, become the "firstling" of the flock here and pass through the material and spiritual horror of the cross that He might make men merely moral, upright, satisfactory citizens in this life? Does this concept match the wealth of divine prevision, all the details so carefully marked out of God and given by specific inspiration to chosen and selected men; all the hecatombs of beasts, the crimson altars, the stained white robes of priests; all the story of incarnation, the thirty years of a unique and blameless life, then the tragedy that seemed to turn the sky into blood and blackness, the agonizing, indefinable cry and, without warning, the sudden death; or, does such a concept, the concept that all this outlay of forethought and predetermined action was intended to make men good, and good supremely for this life, does such a concept seem a shame, an outrage and an insult, not only to the patient and enduring sufferer, but to the God who ordained it before the world began?

But consider this concept of Christianity as a merely moral life and this world as its particular sphere and place it under another text:

"He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin."

What a saying is that!

He, the holy, the sinless, the perfect, the very expression of God's righteousness, His truth, the image of His substance, the brightness of His glory, His personal manifestation—made sin, accounted as sin, treated and punished as sin, looked upon as so vile, so hateful, so repulsive, that God turns His back upon Him and smites Him with the staggering blows of His measureless judgment.

Look at Him! Jesus Christ on a Roman cross. Son of God and God the Son hung up there by the eternal, foreordaining purpose of God and treated as *the criminal of the universe*; ay! and worse than that; for, since sin is the source of all the world's woes, then treated as the source of all the sorrow and tears and anguish of the world; all the disaster to man and treason to God.

That is the meaning of the text.

Do you think Almighty God framed the heavens, created the earth intentionally for the cross, actually foreordained the topography of the place of a skull called "Calvary," treated His eternally begotten Son as *absolute sin*, that He might lead men to develop the natural goodness in them, establish a character of decency here and then leave them in darkness about any beyond?

Take this concept of Christianity as morality and morality as Christianity and place it under another and altogether uncompromising text:

*"Without shedding of blood is no remission."*

Will you insist that morality is the unique objective of Christianity?

What then has the shedding of blood to do with it?

What has blood of sacrificial altars to do with morality in any age?

Was it necessary that thousands of rams, whole herds of bullocks and flocks of pitiful, helpless sheep should be slaughtered and the book of the covenant sprinkled on every page with this steady flowing stream of blood to make Israel a decent, self-respecting and moral nation? Was it the shedding of blood that made them turn from the idolatries and iniquities of Egypt and give themselves up to faith and devotion in respect to an unseen God? Was it necessary that victim after victim should be slain till the temple seemed like a shambles and the priest like a butcher that the Children of Israel might live a moral and God-honoring life?

Was it necessary that the Son of God should come down from Heaven, fulfill to the letter all this repulsive ritual by offering Himself as a bleeding sacrifice that you might be honest, deal justly with your fellow men, own the existence of God, obey His laws as revealed in nature and your own constitution to the best of your light and ability and then pass out and leave no trace of your departing footsteps beyond the edge of the grave?

Will you say that?

Will you say Christ must quiver in the agony of His physical death, be drowned, overbilled in the judgment wrath of God until the low-hung moon seemed turned to a clot of blood and the slow-descending sun into a blackened cinder just that you might be moral and honest for this life? Does the concept of Christianity as an evolution of moral character match the system set

forth in type, in prophecy and apostolic doctrine ; or, does it render it meaningless, worse than useless, cruel, criminal and barbarous?

What shall we say of the cross of Christ in relation to Christianity considered merely as an ethical system?

The answer should be swift and simple.

If Jesus of Nazareth went through the tragedy of the cross for no other reason than that men might be influenced by His martyrdom to imitate His unselfish, moral life and then go out to the darkness of the grave with the question of Job unanswered, "If a man die, shall he live again?" and this sickening tragedy with its ending of darkness and silence according to the foreordained purpose, counsel and wisdom of God, then the whole scheme of redemption as recorded in Scripture, from the typical lamb slain at Eden's gate to the despairing cry of a brutally crucified Christ, is the most astounding, misdirected wisdom, the most painstaking and inconsequential rites and ceremonies ever invented and a display of useless, fruitless and inexcusable suffering.

If, on the contrary, God the Son created for Himself a new and perfect humanity that He might enter into a knowledge of our woes, our ways and deepest needs ; if He died on the cross to provide a righteous channel whereby the love of God might flow forth in legal and saving value to guilty men, and in such a manner that God could still be just and yet the justifier of the ungodly ; if He died that God might be revealed as inexorable law and measureless love ; if He came to that cross that He might save men upon precisely the same principle by which they had been lost, "the one for the many" ; if He

came as the Second and New man that He might undo the evil of the First man; if as the Second man He bore the sin of the First and reconciled a rebel world to a holy God; if He rose from the dead to become the new and eternal head of the race, the giver of new and spiritual life to men; if now on the basis of His sacrificial death He is able to discharge the penalty and demerit of sin from all who by faith offer Him as a sacrifice for sin and claim Him as a substitute under judgment, create in them the nature of divine sonship and link them to the Fatherhood of God; if on the basis of that sacrificial death He not only rose, ascended and sits on the throne of the universe with all power and a name above every name, but is coming again to raise the dead who believed in Him, change the living who believe in Him and clothing them with a body like unto His own make them immortal; and eventually regenerating this earth make it to be the worthwhile abode of the redeemed and regenerated sons of God, filling them with power to joy in God and be retroactive blessings to one another forever, then the incarnation, the cross, the agony, the whole amazing scheme from first to last and in all its details is justified, becomes a revelation of the wisdom, the genius, the forecasting intellect, the omnipotence and love of God; if all this be true, we are swept beyond the narrow bounds of the finite and must needs fall in adoring wonder before Him who in covenant counsel and according to its terms came to suffer the cross, its agony, its judicial and saving intent.

Measured by the concept of a purely ethical Christianity the texts presented are worthless and the cross of

Christ no better than the blunder of a well-meaning but unwise God.

Read in the light of Holy Scripture and measured by the purpose of an infinite and all-wise God the merely ethical concept of Christianity seems utterly childish, worse than frivolous, a betrayal of Christ and a shameful treason to His cross.

Taking the ethical concept of the mission of Christ, that He really came to develop the divinity in man, recover the naturally born children of God from their spiritual darkness and failure into their true and birth-given estate, awaken them to all the eternal and saving forces in them; accepting the cross as a psychological, pragmatic, kindergarten way of appealing to the moral forces latent in man; and setting over against this concept the plain, unmistakable statements of Old Testament Scripture and their apostolic application to the death of Christ in the New, one of two things is absolute: either the doctrine of the cross as therein set forth is true and the ethical concept of Christianity a movement full of the sinuosities of the first snake that ever hissed a question or formulated a doubt as to the integrity of the Word of God; or, the present and greatly expanded and varied concept of Christianity is true and the doctrine of the cross a horrible fiction, a terrifically outrageous teaching, a harrowing display of neurotic imagination and the whole repulsive scheme a warning to every intelligent, intellectual and advanced minister, every minister abreast with the times, to find his function in turning men away from the contemplation of the death of Christ and the whole sickening scene to the



exemplary and peaceful life of Christ, and to insist on the fact that He spent that life, not in theological and metaphysical speculation, but in doing good—the good, it is said, we all can do.

But take one more text and consider it.

“He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.”

Where does mere moral character stand in relation to this text?

Let it be said you are the most perfectly righteous person who ever trod the earth; that you have a character in which no one can find a flaw; say you do not believe in this story about Jesus Christ, you do not accept Him at all, even, as your best example; say you do not believe in the Bible as the inspired, infallible Word of God. What then? Why then this text declares that your moral, perfectly righteous and helpful character in relation to your fellow men is of no saving value before God. It warns you that as you die and pass into eternity with all your ethical culture you enter there under the wrath of God, and that this wrath will abide on you forever.

What is the modern concept of Christianity in the light of that text but a monstrous and open lie?

But now I turn from all hypothecations and suppositions to positive and absolute affirmation.

I affirm Jesus Christ did not come into the world to live a merely moral life and do good.

I affirm His deeds of benevolence and healing were not the objective, and were in no way the superlative, of His mission.

I affirm His deeds were only incidental to His mis-



sion. They were simply the foretold credentials of His commission, the dynamic demonstration that He was in truth what He claimed to be—the long-announced Messiah of Israel and the Lamb of God who should bear away the sin of the world and reconcile it to God.

I affirm Jesus Christ did not come into the world to be a reformer, an advanced socialist.

Nay!

He saw soldiers everywhere. Everywhere He heard the tramp of armed men returning from the fields of battle. He said no word against war; on the contrary, He warned men that He had not come into the world to bring peace, but a sword, that His coming would put men at variance with one another and bring a bloody controversy concerning Himself. He saw corruption in government. He was born and lived under one of the most corrupt. He organized no movement of reform against it. Instead, He commanded those who lived under it to pay their taxes and therefore support it.

He saw slaves under the whip lash. He saw men toiling for a stipend. He made no effort to liberate the slave, uttered no incendiary word that would stir up revolt, even dissatisfaction, but bade them put their hands upon their mouths and their mouths in the dust and to say, "We are unprofitable slaves." He did not start a campaign for the amelioration of the voluntary laborer nor suggest an increase of wages.

He saw abject poverty; and yet, when a young woman broke an alabaster box, pouring its contents of costly perfume upon Him, He rebuked those who rebuked her (those who called it a waste, would have had it sold

and the proceeds given to the poor) by justifying the expenditure upon Himself, bidding the necessities of the poor to wait.

At no time did He present Himself as an example to be copied by natural men. Never once did He bid them copy Him, translate His earthly life and character into their own and thereby find the way of moral living, daily and eternal salvation.

At no time did He suggest the existence of, nor appeal to, the divine in man. On the contrary, He announced He was from above, the natural man from below. He was of his Father, very God, and the will of His Father He would do. They were of their father the Devil, and the works of their father the Devil they would do.

He denied the theory of evolution as applied to natural character. He said that which was born of the flesh was flesh and would always be flesh; and that which was born of the Spirit was spirit and would always be spirit. You could not gather grapes of thorns nor figs of thistles; neither could a natural man bring forth spiritual fruit.

Twenty centuries have in no wise contradicted His sayings. The purest and noblest man who has lived since, the man who may have sought with all his might and devotion to copy the Christ, to keep in the pathway of His example, has approached no nearer than the distance which lies between the smallest grain of wind-swept sand and the farthest star.

The morality of the Son of God was not didactic. It was incidental to His new, distinct and heaven-begot-

ten, spiritual humanity. It was an involuntary expression rather than a specified scale of teaching.

He did not come to set up His life as a lesson.

The amazing, self-evident truth is—our Lord Jesus Christ *did not come into the world to live at all*. He came intentionally *to die*. He came to die that He might rise again, and *in a humanity that should die no more*.

This is His own testimony. He says:

“Therefore doth my Father love me (and why? because I have lived a moral life? No! but) *because I lay down my life (and why?) that I may take it again*. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This *commandment* have I received from my Father.” (And when? *Before the foundation of the world*; by the decree of God and not man. John 10:17, 18.)

He came into the world to die and to die on the cross with all its intentioned agony of soul and body.

Hear what He says:

“Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for *this cause* came I unto this hour.”

Look at Him there in the garden—in that night of white moonlight and blackest shadows. Hear the sound of Kedron as it murmurs and rushes over its stones as though it would flee into the valley beneath. Hear the half-strangled moan of the wind as though it were a soul in bonds; and then suddenly hear His cry as He asks shudderingly that the cup may be taken away, this cup of the cross; and then just as suddenly and in the same

breath His recognition that it is the will of God that He should drink it, that He had come into the world for that purpose, would drink it even to the dregs and die.

He came to die!

He came to die as the unresisting Lamb of God, the fulfillment of every sacrifice and offering, and by virtue of His death break down every barrier between man's sin and God's holiness, bringing the world back to God and by His resurrection life make Christians and establish Christianity.

I affirm, therefore, that the Christianity He came to set up sweeps on infinite and eternal lines far beyond the thought of the average mind; that it is as far above the modern concept of mere morality and goodness as wisdom is above folly, as Heaven is above earth, as truth is above falsehood and sincerity above deceit.

I affirm the modern minister with his modern concept and all his baggage of critical rationalism is deceiving the people; that although he may talk much about Christ, speak of His spirit and exalt His life, he hides the fact of the sacrificial character of His death and the avouchment of His purpose in His resurrection from the dead. He may speak of righteousness, but it is a righteousness without blood, a righteousness that has never found its way to the cross and knows nothing of the empty grave of a risen and immortal Christ.

I affirm the average Christian is in the dark as to the whole truth of God and that the great mass of mankind today are on the edge of imminent peril by reason of the false preaching that morality is Christianity or that the supreme objective of Christianity is an ethical or moral life.

I shall support this thesis and the general introductory thoughts by three propositions, thus demonstrating that the Son of God came into the world to make men, not moral, but spiritual and—*immortal*.

1. *Our Lord Jesus Christ came into the world, died, rose again and ascended to the right hand of the Father that He might have authority and power to give a new and spiritual life to men.*

The life with which we come into this world is animal, unspiritual. It has no interest in God. It does not know Him as a Father. It never inquires what would be pleasing in His sight. God as God has no more relation to the natural man's consciousness than a sound, a name, the merest word. The blue sky and the darkening clouds pass above him. There are mornings and evenings, the passage of the years, the march of events; and because of these, in some general way, he believes, or, rather, assents to the proposition that there is a God; but God is too far away, too incomprehensible, too wholly outside the cares, the needs, the sorrows and even the joys of life to awaken interest.

The natural man is taken up with time and time things. His whole thought is of the life that now is, how he may eat, drink, clothe himself and gratify the various desires of his every-day being. He is conscious of the winds, the cold of winter and the heat of summer, just as conscious and sensitive as any other animal. He is conscious of persons. There are individuals he likes and others whom he dislikes. Certain conditions make him happy, others render him unhappy, wretched and miserable. His whole existence consists of feelings, emotions.

His life depends entirely upon circumstances and their change. He is conscious of and influenced by everything in the environment of earth and the passing of time; but God, the God who brings the day and the night, the changing seasons and the hurrying years; the God who gives him life and breath and in whom he lives and moves and has his being, of such a God he is as unconscious as the unresponsive stone beneath his feet.

He may be upright, moral, educated, cultured and highly refined; he may, in an intelligent and logical way, recognize the existence of a supreme mind; but the more intelligent and moral he is; the more he achieves in the world, the more he is apt to think of himself as the architect of his own fortunes, the maker and builder of his own life. Joy in God, communion with God! these are realities of experience concerning which he is entirely ignorant. His pride of attainment will lead him, perhaps, to philosophize about God, but never draw nigh to Him. He is religious, and because he is such, will set up a god of some kind. It may be wealth, ambition, power, position, but always in the end the real god he worships and serves is himself. He is religious, but not spiritual, and between religiousness and spirituality there is a bridgeless ocean.

The natural man is, fundamentally, incapable of spiritual things; as it is written:

"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

But this same natural man is not always cultured and refined. He is sometimes brutal, violent, acting out unre-



strainedly the animal in him. He sins, not only against the law of the land, but against his own body and mind. Everywhere, in one form or another, sickness, disease and trouble keep him company and soon, in many cases without warning, his brief and unequal life comes to an end. He dies, his body is buried, he disappears and to the world of men and women crowding after him to the portals of the grave he is as though he had never been.

And this finale of death is itself a revelation of his relation to God, to His law and justice.

Examination into this fact of death will show that *it is not natural*.

Birth is natural.

The birth of a child is like the dawn, like the notes of a song. It wreathes the face of motherhood with smiles. It fills the heart of fatherhood with pride. No one is shocked when a child is born. Every one expects such a thing. It is in the nature of things. It is as it should be.

But death! It is expected. It is dreaded while expected. Every precaution is taken to shut out the idea or even the mention of it. Men turn from it as from a grizzly thing, a reptile, a monster, an indefinable horror, the sudden coming of an environment that seems to make all that has been as though it never had been—an utter mockery of the days of joy, the hours that seemed interminable in their sorrow, an unheard laughter of derision over all past energy, trial and effort. Everything in man revolts against death; his mind, his body. The very pain and disease in him are the protests of life against the undoing of death.



No genius of man is engaged in putting an end to birth. On the contrary, all the skill of which man is capable is consecrated to make birth easy, to ennoble motherhood, to exalt fatherhood.

Not so with death.

Nay! all the genius, all the ability, learning and skill of man are engaged in thwarting the approach of death. It is owned as an enemy. Barricades are thrown up against it. *Materia Medica* is ransacked for remedies that shall check its advance. The knife of the surgeon is sharpened to cut out anything that may be an ally. The whole aim of life is to resist death—and in exact proportion to life is the resistance.

Call death natural! To do so would be an abuse of terms, a denial of fact.

Viewed from every point of view death is unnatural.

Since it is unnatural it is an imposition. Since it is an imposition and man in all his fibre is against it, it has been imposed by a power outside of and superior to man. That which is imposed and by its universality becomes a decree, is a penalty. A penalty can be imposed only by a lawgiver. As the lawgiver in this case, and in the nature of things, is God, then God as the lawgiver has imposed death as a penalty on man. Penalty is for those who have violated law and have thus become sinners; and as death is a penalty imposed upon man, then death is the declaration that man is a sinner and under punishment from God.

"Death" is a great word. It has an immense area. It takes time and eternity to define it.

In final terms it is separation from life; and as in final terms God is life, death is separation from God. The

Son of God Himself has said, "*God is not the God of the dead.*"

As the natural man is morally and intellectually separated from God, then the moral and intellectual state of man is one of death. He is morally, spiritually and (in relation to the knowledge of God) intellectually dead. Thus the sentence of death involves the whole man, his moral and intellectual being, the disruption and final destruction of his body.

He cannot escape his character. By no effort of his own can he become spiritual and arise out of spiritual death. He cannot by searching find out God. He can speculate, he can reason, he can imagine about Him, but in respect to Him so that with intellectual certitude he can say, "I know Him," he is as dead as the dead man in his grave. He cannot triumph over the doom of his body. The sentence of death is written into it from the hour when it is quickened beneath the mother's breast; and the grave, like the horseleach's daughters, is always crying, "Give, give."

As a natural being then man is lost and without remedy.

Because he is helpless he needs a redeemer, a saviour who can meet the demands of the penalty, satisfy the law-giver and bring in a new and spiritual life.

Our Lord Jesus Christ came into the world to be the redeemer, meet the penalty, exhaust it, satisfy the law, the government and being of God and provide a new, spiritual and eternal life.

Wherefore it is written:

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all accep-

tation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

And again:

"The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

This purpose of redemption, salvation and life-giving He accomplished on the cross.

By death He there swallowed up death, submerging it in His co-equal and eternal life, rendered to law all its claims, honored the government of God in the full endurance of the penalty against sin, satisfied the conscience and the being of God, thereby ordained a stay in the proceedings of righteousness against man, held back the judgment due, rose, ascended, took His seat at the right hand of God as the Second Adam with all authority and power to give eternal life to all who by faith should offer Him as a sacrifice, confessing the death of the cross as such, and claim Him as personal substitute under the judgment due.

The transaction of faith is clear and simple.

The moment of faith the nature of sin and the transgressions of the believer are charged to the account of Christ upon the cross, the obedience of Christ unto death is charged to, credited to, the believer. He receives the merit of that obedience. He is dated back to the cross and reckoned as having paid the penalty. He is no longer legally guilty. He is justified. He is accepted before God as legally righteous. On the basis of this legal righteousness accomplished by His death the risen Lord becomes the believer's representative righteousness in the court of God's holiness. As such He communicates to the believer

His own life and nature. The believer is then linked up to and seen in Him both representatively and actually. Thus before God he has both an imputed and an imparted righteousness. In both cases Christ is his righteousness, and in Christ he is before God as the very "*righteousness of God.*" He is a son of God and has a son's life.

And mark you! it is life.

It is not a mere change of opinions, not merely the coming in of new ideas, new forms of thinking, it is real, atomic life, the very essential life of the Son of God; so that those who have it are, as it is written, "partakers of the divine nature." It has all the characteristics of His divinely wrought and perfect human nature. It hates sin and loves righteousness. It listens eagerly for the voice and the Word of God. It rejoices in the truth. It yearns after God. It seeks to become conscious of Him. It is conscious of Him, more conscious at times than of all the straining, material forces about it of sight, of touch and sound. It responds to God's will. It may be assaulted, cast down and made exceeding sorrowful almost unto death by the old remaining nature of the flesh; but it will rise up with renewed energy and reach after God. It brings forth the fruit of righteousness. It makes the old-time spiritual desert of the heart to bloom and blossom as the rose, and the blooming and the blossoming will be of the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valley. It hungers and thirsts after righteousness and is filled, that it may hunger and thirst again and again be filled. Every day it wishes to be like Christ as He is and is grieved and sorely sick when its aspirations and desires are hindered and fall short. Its vision goes quite beyond the things of time and

sense. Day by day it loosens the grasp of the soul on the things of this life and lifts it into a contemplation of the things of Heaven and eternity. Again and again in wondrous moments of experience it carries the soul upward till it finds itself seated in heavenly places in Christ. It leads the soul to look up to the glorified Lord as the chiefest among ten thousands and the one altogether lovely, with Paul cries out, "The love of Christ constraineth us," and when unbalked by tradition and unhindered by false teaching, with the Spirit and the Bride, will say, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus," and will look upon the promise of the Coming as "that blessed hope"; with David this new life will lead the soul to say, "As the heart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, the living God." Like Moses he who is filled with the spiritual life will endure "as seeing him that is invisible"; more and more he will be like them "that watch for the morning," and with John in Patmos he will be waiting to hear the voice as it were the voice of a trumpet talking with him; waiting to hear that all-compelling voice say, "Come up hither"; and ready like John with gladness and unutterable joy to pass through the "opened" door into Heaven.

This new and spiritual life in men has been during the last two thousand years the source of all the worthwhile morality in the world and is so today.

Here is a palingenesis, a new creation, worthy of the God who alone can produce it. Here is a concept which sets aside man and his futile energies of self-righteousness and brings in God and His righteousness. A concept which affirms God is the God of love, but at the same

time, a God of law, a God who will "by no means clear the guilty"; but a God who has found a way by which His love may flow out legally and in saving value through the death of His Son; a concept which so far from suggesting the hideous idea that the cross made God loving, that it was lifted up and the Son nailed there to save the sinner from the desire of God to destroy him, declares the cross made God's law (not the law of Sinai merely—but essential law) the righteous channel by which His life-giving love, the love that was always moved by the sinner's sorrow and woe, the love that was always wanting to save him, the love that was always going after him and with the beat of an infinite heart seeking to save him, that His love might flow forth legally and in unhindered volume to reach the dying soul; a concept which so far from making God's love a weakling sentimentality, violating law, ignoring justice, dishonoring the divine character and putting the believer in the position of one unwhipped of justice, whose very salvation would violate law and miscarry justice, affirms and demonstrates that sin has been punished, justice honored, God's character for righteousness maintained and the sinner saved.

I knew an aged mother whose son was condemned to die. In a fit of anger he had killed a fellow man. Because she was poor and could not afford to go otherwise she travelled on foot over the hills to the little county town to visit him in prison before the fatal day. She loved him with an unfailing love. No matter though he had grown to manhood he was still the child she had carried in her arms, still the boy who had once stood at her knee, the boy upon whom she had poured out all a



loving mother's tender and unselfish care. No matter what others might say of him; no matter how vile and wicked they might think him, how bitter they might be against him, he was her boy, bone of her bone and flesh of her flesh. She loved him still. When others deserted him she remained true, and, if anything, more loving and tender than ever. Her love had brought her on her trembling feet to the door of his cell. She looked at him through blinding tears and could only say in broken voice, "O my boy!" Her love was great enough and strong enough to break down the iron bars and bring him forth. Her love was wondrous enough to take him by the hand, cover his face with kisses and lead him back to the shelter of the home and make it a resting-place for his troubled soul. Why then did she not break down those bars, why did she not open the prison door and bid him come forth and follow her to home, to life and days of peace? Why did she lean her head, old and grey, against the bars and weep and through her straining tears look at him and with choking sobs repeat, "My boy, my boy," and never take him thence? The answer is clear and plain. Her love was great enough, but the law had a claim against her son. Her love, great as it was, could not deny the claim nor set aside the law. The claim must be met and satisfied first.

God loved the sinner under sentence of death, loved him with an everlasting love. He had always loved him, hated the sin, but loved the helpless, even though guilty, sinner. His love would have saved him, but His law had a claim. God's love could neither deny nor set aside God's law. The claim of the law must be met, justice



must be satisfied, God's government must be honored, God's character of righteousness maintained. Only God could satisfy God. Only God could atone to God for man. God the Son came and took the sinner's place and paid the penalty. Then God's love lawfully opened the door and bade the sinner come forth, not a sinner unwhipped of justice, but a sinner whose sin had been answered for and fully punished in another. That is both law and love. The one sustained and the other revealed. It is the only concept which can maintain the integrity of God's character and bring security and peace to the believing sinner.

Tell me the God who has said He will by no means clear the guilty, and has said the soul that sinneth, it shall die, has changed His mind and now promises to let me go without paying the toll of justice; tell me that, but it will give me no peace, no sense of rest nor security. Tell me God has broken His word about my sin, has set aside His law and judgment and is ready to let me go unpunished and I shall say to myself and with a logic no man can contravene: "If God can break His word today that He may forgive me just because He feels like it, He may break His word again tomorrow and, by some sudden change of His vacillating, sentimental and emotional mind, conclude to punish and destroy me at the last."

With such a God as that I should never be sure that morning and evening would follow each other. I should never be certain that any premise would have its sequence. No! but tell me instead that God has punished me in my substitute; that the legal act and transaction of

the cross has satisfied His legal conscience, sustained His government and honored His being; that He has kept His word about sin, and I shall be at peace. I shall feel absolutely secure. That cross while it will reveal His love to me will reveal it in a way which shows He hates sin, that He has kept His word about it, has not merely forgiven me and let me go at the expense of justice, but has exacted of me to the full all justice could demand, that I have been punished, have paid all the debt I owe, am a debtor still, but—to *grace alone*.

Here is a concept of Christianity and the mission of Christ in respect to it which measures up to the character of God both for wisdom and holiness, for love and for law; a concept which justifies the stupendous act of the incarnation, the drama of the cross, its agony and woe; a concept which enunciates and sustains the principle of "the one for the many," the principle upon which man was lost, as the principle by which equally he should be saved: as the first man sinned and made all men unrighteous who were potentially in him; so, this Second man died in response to the First man's sin, and answering for all who are potentially in Him makes them righteous as He is righteous, saves them, gives them new and spiritual life, even all who by faith offer Him as sacrifice and claim Him as substitute.

This then is the first proposition, that our Lord Jesus Christ did not come into the world to make men moral, to save them by the evolution of natural character, but to save them on the ground of His death and give them a new and spiritual character, a new spiritual life, even His own.

Consider the second proposition.

2. *Our Lord Jesus Christ came into this world, died, rose, ascended to Heaven and sat down at the right hand of God that He might have authority and power to give immortality to all who should receive His new and spiritual life, recreate the earth and bring the immortal sons of God to dwell in it.*

The words "immortal" and "immortality" are two, much misunderstood words. Again and again we hear the expression or see written, "the immortal soul," "the immortality of the soul."

Nowhere in the Word of God from one end to the other can such an expression be found. Never is it said the soul is immortal; not once is the word "immortality" applied to the soul.

But let no mistake be made here.

In saying that "immortal" and "immortality" cannot be applied to the soul with Scriptural authority it is not intended to suggest for a moment that Scripture teaches such a thing as the extinction or annihilation of the soul at death. The Son of God Himself has settled that issue forever. He has said you can kill the body, but you cannot kill the soul. Whether for good or ill the soul once created must exist forever.

"Immortal," "immortality," are words which in Scripture are applied only to the body. To be immortal is to have a body which shall be deathless and incorruptible. Immortality is that condition in which the soul is sheathed in, dwells in, a body that never can be sick, weary, smitten with pain, nor death; a body that never will be the agent of sin, but a body like unto that of the

Son of God, glorious, beautiful, dynamic, all-powerful, unchangingly young, eternal.

And this sort of a body belongs only to those who shall receive a new and spiritual life from the risen Son of God.

This is the objective of redemption. This is its master climax.

Look at man as he is, full of disease from the hour of his birth, doomed to die, his body to decay and perish.

Is this the best God can do for man: allow him to come into the world, wither, shrivel under the fire and flame of disease, languish in more or less pain, curse oftentimes the fact that he lives, writhe and cry out in his mortal body as in a torture chamber, suffering agony as though fiendish inquisitors were putting him on the rack, wrenching him apart, or burning him by slow degrees—then die and his body become so repulsive, foul, corrupt, it must be quickly hidden away in the darkness of the grave?

Nay! All this state, as already declared, is an *execution*, the suffering and punishment for sin.

Death is the witness of man's sin and God's righteousness—every grave is their silent proclamation.

But the Son of God came into the world to "abolish" death.

He came to abolish death by His death.

The death of Christ, like the death of the sinner, was twofold.

It was moral and intellectual separation from God.

His cry on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" was the record both of a fact and a question.

As a fact, He was forsaken—separated—shut out from God, from deity.

He said so and it was so.

His deity repudiated fellowship with His humanity.

His humanity suffered the agony of the separation, suffered it in and through His *undivided* personality. In His personality as God He shut out His own humanity. In His personality as real man He suffered the shutting out. In both cases He was the same person. On that cross He was there as God and He was there as man.

The question "Why?" was an expression of intellectual darkness.

Just as actual as the fact of the separation was the reach of the "Why?"

This was death, moral and intellectual separation from God, from essential deity, separation from the fellowship and consciousness of the God in Him. A separation in which His one and undivided personality identified itself in all the judicial and horror side of the experience, in the indefinable, and to Him as man, inexplicable darkness of it—"WHY—hast thou forsaken me?"

He suffered death in the body.

His spirit and soul were separated from the body.

By His death on the cross He abolished death *officially*.

It has been abolished both *de jure* and *de facto* in respect to moral and intellectual death by the impartation of His own spiritual life and the consciousness of God to the believer.

It was abolished *de jure*, but has not yet been abolished *de facto* in respect to the believer's body.

Christians still die, their bodies are carried to the grave.

But the bodily death of the Christian must be abolished actually.

There must come a time when Christians who have died, who are now disembodied, must receive a perfect and immortal body.

There must come a time when living Christians shall not die.

Until life is accomplished redemption is not complete.

If generation after generation of Christians should continue to die; if disembodiment should be the eternal ultimate of the believer in Heaven, then the immortality of Christ would be His scandal, His deathless, glorified, immortal body His own contradiction.

His presence in Heaven in the body that did not see corruption, and that neither death nor the grave could hold, is the witness that He triumphed over both death and the grave; but His disembodied saints dwelling in Heaven with Him (for Scripture says that at death they are "absent from home in this body and present at their home with the Lord") is a demonstration that the triumph over death and the grave has not yet come to them and that their redemption is not yet complete.

They are not yet the hailed and crowned victors.

How can Paul be victor over death and the grave so long as his body which was once the temple of the Holy Ghost lies fallen and mingled with the dust of earth?

What is greater witness of defeat and disaster than a once beautiful temple overthrown, its columns broken, scattered, lying prone and buried in the dust?



What so wonderful a temple ever on earth as the body indwelt by the Holy Ghost, the sacred shrine of an indwelling God? What sadder spectacle of ruin and abiding disaster should this temple continue to lie with broken shaft and empty shrine?

And the immortality of Christ standing out clear and distinct on this background of the incomplete redemption of those for whom He died would be, indeed, a scandal to Himself, proving that while He Himself had won the victory over death and the grave, He had wholly and utterly failed in behalf of those for whom He had died.

To fulfill the covenant purpose of redemption He must raise the bodies of the dead who died believing in Him; He must change the bodies of the living who believe in Him.

This is logical, absolutely in the nature of things.

This is His own affirmation in that hour when on His way to raise Lazarus from the dead He would comfort Martha, the broken-hearted sister who met Him with her reproach and tears; tears and reproach that Lazarus was dead and need not to have died if Jesus had only responded sooner to the message sent Him and had hastened to the sick man's side.

Jesus said to her:

"I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, *though he were dead*, yet shall he live:

"And whosoever *liveth and believeth* in me *shall never die.*"

In these words as seeds of hope from the garden of the Lord there springs forth in the bloom of full assurance the promise that the body shall be given back to the

dead He loves, and that a time will come when the touch of death will be no more forever upon the bodies of those who live and believe.

This resurrection of the dead and the transfiguration of the living is the very thing the Word of God declares shall take place when our Lord shall come the second time.

After His ascension to Heaven He sends down this comforting word to the Church, to all who, like Martha, mourn their dead and see no light.

"I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus (literally, 'whom Jesus has put to sleep') will God bring with him.

"For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord (literally, 'in' the word of the Lord; that is, by a special revelation from the Lord—the same revelation He anticipatively gave to Martha) that *we which are alive*, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent (that is, go before) them which are asleep.

"For the Lord himself (not his Spirit—but *Himself*) shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise *first*;

"Then we which are *alive and remain*, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air (and this word 'meet' has in it the sense of meeting and returning together): and so shall we ever be with the Lord (wherever he may be).

"Wherefore *comfort* one another with these words."

In his letter to the Corinthians the Apostle details the event.

He says:

"Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all *sleep* (we shall not all *die*), but we (the *living believers*) shall all be changed,

"In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye at the *last trump* (not the *first*, that is for the dead): for the *trumpet* shall sound (for the dead as well as the living) and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." And here he marks the moment when immortality is given.

Listen to it well: it is the hour of *completed* redemption:

"So *when* this corruptible (body) shall have put on incorruption, and this *mortal* (body) *shall have put on immortality*, *THEN* (and not till then) shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."

He will first raise the dead.

It is not necessary to ask—"How?"

He who formed the first man from the dust will have no difficulty in raising from their graves the bodies of the saints which are sleeping there.

He who upholds all things by the word of His power and in whom all things consist will find no hindrance when He gives the fiat word that shall bid the dead to rise.

Nevertheless, the principle of the resurrection of the saints of God is plainly set forth in Holy Writ.

The dead body of the Christian is sown as a seed.

“Thou sowest not that body that shall be, but—  
*a bare grain.*”

A seed, after planting or burial, disintegrates.

There is an element of it, however, which, in spite of decay, remains. That part is linked up to the sun in heaven by the unseen air.

There is a movement called “germination.” At the full moment of it the sun by and through the unseen air descends its power and touches the remaining element of the seed, causing it to come forth from its place of planting or burial, its very grave, in new form—essentially the seed that was sown, yet new and fruitful.

The planted, buried body of the Christian goes back to its constituent elements, it decays and appears to be destroyed.

Since it is authoritatively and officially declared by an inspired apostle to be a “*seed*” when buried, then there must be (if the analogy is to be of any avail whatever) an element which remains (and it must be remembered, death in its essential meaning is the separation of the individual from his body; and no matter should the body even be kept alive, without the individual, without the spirit and soul—it would still be death to the Christian; so that, the claim of some that if the body is not actually and wholly without an element of vitality it is not death, does not touch the issue).

This remaining and conserved element of the body is linked up by the unseen Holy Spirit (of which the air is the symbol) to the eternal Son of God in Heaven (who is symbolically declared to be the “sun of righteous-

ness"). There will come a moment of germination called in Scripture, "The First Resurrection." The First Resurrection will take place at the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will descend into the heavens above our earth. By and through the agency of the Holy Spirit He will cause the bodies to come forth (for, it is written: "He that raised up Christ from the dead shall *also* quicken your *mortal bodies* by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.") These bodies will come forth in new fashion, beautiful, glorious, like unto the body of the Lord Himself—*immortal*.

By the same power and at the sounding of the *last* trump (the trumpet sounds *first* for the dead and then a *second* and *last* trump for the living, thus proving the last trump of Corinthians has nothing to do whatever with the *seventh* trumpet of Revelation; that is to say, they are not identical) the living shall be changed and made immortal as the risen dead.

But our Lord not only died, rose again and ascended to the throne of God that He might regenerate man in soul and body, but that He might regenerate, recreate the earth.

By Him was the earth originally created, and at the same time as the "heavens" of suns and systems of suns.

Because of the sin and rebellion of the *first created being* whom we know as the Devil and Satan, but who was Lucifer, the son of the morning and Light-bearer, the earth fell into ruin (for God did not create the earth a chaos; "it *became*" such. This is the force of the Hebrew form of the word as used).

It was the Son of God, the pre-incarnate God the

Son who recovered it from its state of ruin, remade it in six days, created man upon it and set him there as the vice-gerent of God.

The sin and transgression of man has stained the earth. Its present physical condition is due to sin (and this may be demonstrated scientifically). It is not a fit abode for the sons of God. The only immortal son of God now living was not permitted of God the Father to stay in it after His resurrection. He took him temporarily to Heaven and to His throne.

The Son of God will again refashion the earth.

He will make it as it ought to be and as God originally intended it should be—the *dwelling-place of immortal men*.

He will cause it to pass through purifying fire. It will not be burned up, destroyed, but cleansed.

This recreative act will take place after the Second Resurrection. Between the First and the Second Resurrections there is a period of a thousand years.

During this parenthetical period Christ, with restored and regenerated Israel and the specially rewarded Christians, will reign on the earth with Jerusalem as the Capital seat; the Church as a body reigning over the earth in associated glory with the kingly Christ. This millennial period is named officially by the Lord Himself as "the joy of the Lord." It is that hour of hours in which He justifies His title as the King of the Jews, the King of Israel; and by reason of His righteousness becomes the King of kings and Lord of the whole earth.

It is at the end of this golden, millennial glory and after the final judicial act of God, when the unrighteous



and the unclean have heard their doom, that the consuming fire bursts forth from the enveloping atmosphere and from the depths of the earth, consuming and destroying all that is stained and marked with sin; out of this flaming matrix the Lord will bring forth the earth into that new condition and state which is described as "the new heavens and the new earth."

The earth will be lifted into a new orbit (for we are told there will be "no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it").

It will be a perfect earth.

Into this perfect earth the Son of God will bring His company of redeemed and immortal sons of God.

There will be no more sin, sickness, sorrow, pain and death. "The former things" shall have passed away.

Time as we count it painfully from day to day, from season to season and from year to year will be abolished.

Darkness as well as sin will be abolished. Light like life will be uninterrupted, perpetual.

In perfect bodies like the Lord's, with mind delivered from the stress and strain of sin, filled with the human intellect of Christ and the knowledge and consciousness of God, the regenerated people of God shall fulfill the original purpose of the creation of man. Then shall each be an incarnation and manifestation of God, a perfect and complete re-incarnation of Christ. Life shall be worth while, a song, a psalm of praise, a psalm of thanksgiving and joy. Eternity will not exhaust this life nor its resources. The mainspring of it will be always, "Christ in them," the ever forward hope of new and unfolding glory; it will be a gamut, a scale "from

glory unto glory." For it is sublimely written, "Of the *increase* of his *government* and *peace* there shall be *no end*."

The initial of all this consummation is, of course, the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; *not* the Coming from heaven *with* all His attendant saints, *not* the appearing in glory, but the Coming from heaven *for* His saints.

This Coming is secret, invisible to the world and is always—*imminent*. He Himself compares that part of His Coming to the coming of a thief. He has said to the professing Church and therefore as a warning to the true Christian in it:

"I will arrive over thee as a thief; and thou shalt not know *what hour* I will arrive over thee."

Thus by virtue of the redemption which is in Christ Jesus our Lord we, as Christians, are always standing on the threshold of immortality; always at the point where with Him at His Coming for us we may take part in that tremendous series of events which in their unfolding process shall culminate the amazing and eternal purpose of God: a world of sin and ruined sinners transformed into the dwelling-place and home of God's immortal sons; and these immortal, glorified sons none other than those who one time were lost, undone, wretched and hopeless sinners; sons who through the endless age in their unfolding powers shall more and more reveal the divinity in them; more and more bring forth from the earth the endless wonders stored within it; more and more discover and reveal the marvel of creation's laws and forces; more and more make this

world the center of the astonished gaze of angelic hosts, until as it sweeps through its special orbit it shall be seen, not only as the center of the universe and throne of Him who is forevermore the visibility of the infinite God, but as it moves amid the shining congeries of other inhabited and adoring worlds will be the proclamation that the highest glory of God is neither His omnipotence nor omniscience, not the incomprehensible nor indescribable fact of His omnipresence (that He is everywhere and at the same time in all things), but that *He is love*; and from realm to realm the song will echo in rhythmic strains, "*God is love, God is love*"; and it will be repeated from lip to lip amid the myriad angelic throng that the infinite God became man, died for men, redeemed them and fashioned them as His sons; and evermore the name of this God exalted and lifted above every name, the name at which every knee shall bow in Heaven, and every knee in earth, and every knee under the earth, and every tongue confess, shall be the name of—JESUS—confessing that He is Lord to the glory of God the Father: that in Him, through Him and by Him alone the Fatherhood of God may be seen and known, that measureless begetting love which first expressed itself in the eternally begotten Son, and now, in the redemption by and through Him of the many sons; so that, forevermore will the new and perfect earth proclaim that God is love, and that this God in all His fulness is both infinite God and immortal man—even—JESUS.

By the side of this far-reaching, eternally outswEEPing concept, how utterly pitiful is that proposition which makes the first advent to have no greater significance

than the building up of a community of morally decent, *mortal* beings who, filling out their little day of tears, heartache and more or less involuntary violation of their own beings, pass out at last into the grave and give no sign of the beyond, leave no word of "the over there"! How small, and if it were not so incomparably tragic, almost contemptible, this modern preaching and teaching which shuts out eternity from the Christian vision (save an indistinct, indefinite, disembodied and ghostly, unreal state, "beyond the 'bounds of time and space (?)'"') and confines Christianity and even the Church in its highest and best estate to a horizon bound on the one side by the cradle and on the other by the grave; a system in which the *race* and *not the individual* is—immortal; a system which narrows the Christian to the near-sighted contemplation of dates, of times and changing seasons—like other ephemera of earth!

O the pitifulness and the littleness of it all!

But this concept! God's law and God's love revealed without contradiction of each other, His hate of sin and His love of the sinner! This world from eternity ordained to be the arena of redemption; a world that should display the righteousness of God and—*the heart of God*; a world in which God meets the ruin of the soul and then lifts these worms of the dust, mere creatures of the clod, till they become divine sons of an infinite Father! How that concept justifies the antecedent and preparatory revelation of the Old Testament; how it justifies that star-sown night of Bethlehem and the angel song; how it justifies that "one for the many," on the ridge of Calvary; how it justifies the planting

of the cross on the "skull" of a morally dead world; how it justifies all the physical, mental and soul agony of the cross, the darkness, the perplexity and the crimson blood!

O yes, let it be repeated, a redeemed world, a regenerated and holy race of immortal sons of God, a regenerated earth, unstained of sin, the dwelling-place of God and man (for, is it not written, "*God will dwell with them*—God himself shall be with them"?), the center of the universe, the revelation of God's heart-beat. O it was well worth while that God should become man, take His new humanity into union with Godhead, well worth while the day of incarnation and the crucial agony, that God might find and understand the need of man in Christ's humanity and that man might find his need and meet the love of God in Christ's humanity.

Yes, the concept matches the price paid and the price paid is well worth while in the realization and glory of the concept.

This then is the second proposition that Jesus Christ did not come into the world to make men moral, but to give them a new and spiritual life, the life of His divine human nature and make them like Himself—immortal.

Consider the third and last proposition.

3. *Those who do not accept Jesus Christ as the Son of God, offer Him by faith as a sacrifice for sin and claim Him as a personal substitute are not and never will be immortal.*

At the end of the thousand years in which Christ shall be ruling in the earth and the Church as a body of associated rulers in Heaven overruling the earth with

Him, the dead out of Christ will be raised and made to appear before the great white throne.

They will appear there in their bodies.

How they will be raised no one knows. It has never been revealed. Since it has not been revealed and "the secret things belong unto God," it is not necessary to know. It is a fact of revelation. That is sufficient.

It is plainly written: Hear what the Apostle John writes:

"I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God."

They will be judged "according to their works."

They will be judged according to the age in which they have lived and the standard of God given in that age.

They will be judged by conscience, by family responsibility, by written law, by God manifest in the flesh (that is, Israel, the Jews who beheld the Son of God as He walked among them, heard Him speak, saw what He did in fulfillment of their own Scriptures, denied His claims as King and crucified Him between two thieves), by the Gospel of grace proclaimed in this age of the Holy Ghost and the Church and sent forth unto the uttermost parts of the earth and in every tongue, by the Gospel of the kingdom proclaimed in the "time of the end," by the splendors of righteousness revealed in the millennial era, the visible presence of the Son and the perfect administration of government and law in the hands of the Son as the righteous, immortal man and infinite king, and in every age by the glory of the heavens, by sun and moon and star, by every waning and waxing system, which shall take away every excuse of idolatry



or worship of the gods by any nation or race or people.

Not one among them will be found written in the book of life.

On them will be imposed the sentence of the second death.

The second death is in principle precisely the same as the first death.

In the first death the spirit and soul are separated from the body (it is this separation which produces the death of the body—it is not death that produces the separation), then, constructively, the body is destroyed.

In the second death spirit and soul are likewise separated from the body (and this in the nature of the case; for this is, in Scripture, the definition of death; as it is written: "The body without the spirit is dead" James 2:26).

The difference between the first death and the second death is wholly causal.

It lies in the difference of the agencies which produce them.

In the first death the agencies or causes are varied.

In the second death there is but one cause; as it is written:

"And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

The one and only instrumental cause of the second death is—*fire*.

There is a further difference in the two deaths.

That difference is consequent.

After the first death there will be a resurrection of the body, both of saint and sinner. The Christian will

rise first; the Christless, as already stated, a *thousand years later*.

After the second death there will be *no resurrection*.  
What then?

The answer is self-evident.

As the material fire which can kill the body in the first death cannot kill the soul, manifestly the material fire of the second death cannot kill the soul; and as there will be no resurrection, then the *unkilled* soul will remain a disembodied thing forever—an *eternal ghost*.

To this it has been objected that our Lord Himself teaches the contrary, even, the extinction of the soul as well as the body in hell (gehenna). As it is written:

“And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both body and soul in hell” (Matthew 10:28).

In this particular text our Lord uses two distinct words in respect to the soul: “kill” and “destroy.”

First He says, “Fear not them which kill the body, but are *not able to kill the soul*.”

The word “to kill” is the Greek *apokteino*. It signifies “to slay,” “to do away with,” “to abolish.”

In the New Testament “to kill” is never applied to the soul.

Our Lord says *it cannot be killed, it cannot be slain, it cannot be done away with, it cannot be ABOLISHED*; and as in final terms “to kill” means to take away life or existence, then neither life nor existence can be taken away from the soul.

The other word “destroy” is the Greek *apóllumi*. It

means "to perish," and when applied to the body includes necessarily the idea "to kill"; and as "to kill" is "to take away life," "to abolish," when applied to the body it must mean its total, ultimate destruction or annihilation; but since the Son of God has declared the soul *cannot be killed*, then "destroy" when applied to the soul cannot have the sense of "to kill" and consequently cannot signify the annihilation of the soul.

This is corroborated by the fact that the word "destroy" is used in cases and under circumstances where it cannot possibly mean annihilation. This overwhelmingly proves it does not have one invariable meaning. Since it does not have one invariable meaning, this easily demonstrable fact destroys, and destroys at one blow, the specious but fictitious argument that it must invariably signify annihilation when applied to the soul.

Take some of the passages in which the word "destroy" does not, and cannot, mean annihilation.

Take for example our Lord's declaration that He came only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; as it is written:

"But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

The word "lost" as used here is actually as to form, "having been lost," and the verb is *apóllumi*, destroy. Literally rendered we should have to read, "the having been destroyed sheep of the house of Israel"; and if the word "destroy" has only one and invariable meaning, and that meaning *in toto* is annihilation, the cessation of being or existence, then our Lord is represented as saying that He came only to those sheep of the house of Israel

that had been already annihilated; in other words, He came to save those who had ceased to exist.

It is evident and in the nature of the case no such meaning is intended; and that, therefore, "destroy" does not have an invariable meaning, that "annihilation" is not its sole definition.

Take another example.

"What man of you having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost?"

To translate the text literally we should have to say:

"What man of you having an hundred sheep, and *having destroyed* one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness and go after that which *has been destroyed*."

The word translated "lost" is the word *apóllumi*. If that word means invariably to destroy with the idea of annihilation, we should then be forced to affirm that the shepherd had in some way or another caused his sheep to be annihilated, had made it to cease to exist, had in some fashion extinguished its life; and that he felt himself under bonds to leave the ninety and nine still living and breathing and go after the one he had annihilated.

Take the third part of this parable (for the lost sheep, the lost piece of money and the lost son form distinct parts of one great parable) which relates to the prodigal son, at that moment when his father receives him and welcomes him home.

Listen to what the father says:

"This my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost and is found."

The word "lost" is again the word *apóllumi*, "destroy."

Literally translated, therefore, we should read:

"This my son was dead, and is alive again; he was destroyed and is found."

If "destroy" means invariably in final terms to annihilate, to put out of existence, then the father says of his prodigal son:

"This my son was dead and is alive again; he was annihilated, he had ceased to exist and is found."

But we know from the story itself the son was not actually dead; he was, even while a prodigal, alive enough to fill his belly with the husks the swine did eat; he was also alive enough to seek his father's house and reason about it; and the father found him alive enough to fall on his neck and kiss him.

It is clear then that although the father said he was dead, he was, as to his body, not dead at all; and since his body was not dead he certainly had not ceased to exist. The word "destroy," therefore, in this case does not mean to annihilate, to cease to be; and it should be indisputably clear that neither "death" nor "destruction," neither "to die" nor "to destroy" have one single and uniform meaning.

Writing to the Roman Christians the Apostle Paul says:

"Destroy not him with thy meat for whom Christ died."

He is writing to Christians who feel themselves

strong in the faith not to cast a stumbling-block before the brother of weaker faith.

There were Christians at Rome as well as at Corinth who could buy meat in the markets once offered to idols in their temples, eat it and not interfere (so they said) with their spiritual life and communion.

There were other Christians, however, who could not do this. It was an offence to them. They felt it was wrong. If they should follow the example of others their conscience would be troubled, they would lose communion and spiritual power. The Christian who felt himself strong enough to eat the idols' meat and have no stirrings of conscience would, nevertheless, be throwing a stumbling-block and occasion to fall in his weaker brother's way; and it is in warning against this selfish and inconsiderate action that the Apostle says to these selfish, self-gratifying, self-boasting and spiritually immune Christians: "Destroy not him with thy meat (that is, by your own thoughtless and careless action) for whom Christ died."

The word "destroy" in the passage is *apóllumi*; and if we are to accept it as invariably meaning annihilation in its ultimate definition then the Apostle actually says to the stronger and self-satisfied Christian, "Do not annihilate him with thy meat for whom Christ died."

Does he mean that? Does Paul mean that if you as a Christian should be careless enough, selfish enough and thoroughly indifferent as to the effect of your example to cast a stumbling-block before your fellow Christian and cause him to fall away from his spiritual life you would annihilate him, put him out of existence?



Do you think Paul meant that?

To ask the question is to answer it.

The answer is and must be—"No."

The necessary answer is a logical and dynamic demonstration that the word "destroy" does not have one fixed, invariable meaning, the fixed meaning to "annihilate," to "put an end to existence."

It is a demonstration that it has other meanings and applications.

In the case of the lost sheep of the house of Israel, we are to understand our Lord as teaching that the Children of Israel like wandering sheep had turned away from Jehovah, their Lord and God, and had morally and spiritually destroyed themselves. This is exactly what the prophet Hosea says; this is the literal application of the word and idea of "destroy" which he makes to the Children of Israel.

He says; or, rather, the Lord speaking by him says:

"O Israel, thou *hast destroyed* thyself; but in me is thy help" (Hosea 13:9).

The Lord was speaking to a living, existing people; and yet, living and existing as they were, He declared they had destroyed themselves.

By no possible legerdemain of interpretation is it possible to twist this statement to mean anything else than that Israel had departed from God and His ways, had walked in by- and forbidden paths.

The Lord Himself gives the definition of "destroy" as He applies it.

He says:

"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge."

And then He says:

"Because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee."

This was their destruction, they had turned away from the living God. They had rejected His Word. They did not any longer know His mind and will. He had withdrawn from them. They had fallen into national and spiritual disaster. They were never so alive, so abominably full of the flesh and all the palpitating evidence of earthly life and existence. And yet with all this demonstration of existence the Lord declares they are a self-destroyed people, far from actually dead and annihilated as to bodies and persons, yet morally destroyed and set aside of Him.

In the case of the shepherd who lost his sheep it is evident through some unstated fault of his he had caused his sheep to wander away from the rest of the flock and felt under obligation to go himself that he might seek and find it; nor is it possible to put any other meaning into the word "lost" even though it be the word "destroy."

The same exegesis is demanded in the story of the prodigal son.

Although the father said that he had been dead and lost, and although the word "lost" is "destroy," he never for a moment meant that he had been annihilated nor that he was even actually dead as to his body; but, rather, that he had so wandered away from home and its influences, had so squandered, not only his money, but his chastity among harlots and his honor among men, had so departed from the path of rectitude and decency, that he was bankrupt in character, without influence and respect among men; he had so gone down

the path of sin that to the father he seemed as one who had died or as one lost on the mountains, in some vast wilderness or the depths of the sea; he was morally dead and lost; and this is the very idea the Apostle expresses when writing to the Ephesians he says: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." At no time were these people dead as to the body; but they were morally and spiritually dead; and so that we may make no mistake as to the character of the death he says: "dead *in trespasses and sins*." This was the kind of death that had fallen upon the prodigal son, this was what the father meant when he said he was "lost," "destroyed."

The destruction of the body in the lake of fire means its death, and since it will never be raised again, the second death for the body means its utter, total, final extinction, annihilation; but, since our Lord Jesus Christ does not apply the word "kill" (which word "kill" means to take away life, existence) to the soul, and says authoritatively and in such a way as that it ends all controversy, that the soul *cannot* be killed; and the word "destroy" as used in this particular text in Matthew in relation to the soul is used in other cases in the sense of moral and spiritual destruction and not annihilation, then, however much the word may signify the annihilation of the body in the material fire of gehenna it does not signify the annihilation of the soul, but does mean, as a consequence of the total destruction of the body, no more resurrection and no more hope, the total moral and *spiritual* destruction of the soul.

A finally annihilated body, a continually existent,

but morally dead and spiritually destroyed soul, a soul forever shut out from hope in God! surely one need not fear physical death, but well enough may one fear and shrink back with horror at the thought of eternal, spiritual death and destruction—this ultimate of the second death.

The soul that passes into the second death will be disembodied forever, a bodiless ghost cast forth into the "outer darkness," a "wandering star" unto whom is reserved "*the blackness of darkness*" forever; outside the orbit of that Sun of righteousness who is the Son of God and God the Son.

In that disembodied state the soul will bear the record of all the deeds of the body, as well as the thoughts, the operations and the desires of the mind—aspirations, desires, appetites still present, but impossible to be gratified.

That lost soul will be a mere human derelict tossed on the waves of eternity, ever seeking the harbor of peace and never finding it; for, it is written:

"There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked."

He says they are—

*"Like the troubled sea when it cannot rest."*

These have missed spiritual life and sonship with God. They have missed the purpose for which God created man—that he might "glorify God and enjoy him forever."

They have missed the great climacteric purpose in man—**IMMORTALITY**.

*Eternal soul existence* shall be theirs, but—*immortality—never*—this is the boon and privilege of sons of

God alone. Evermore the ghosts of eternity, phantom wrecks of humanity, appalling witnesses of the power of sin, without hope of salvage they shall drift upon the shoreless wastes of that indefinable extension we call—eternity.

The most appalling wreckage of all will be the human being who lived the most exemplary of lives in a Christian land; so that his daily life seemed even better than that of most professed Christians, but to whom the name of Christ meant nothing more at the best than the symbol of a good man, a helpful partner in moral endeavor; moral people who turned away from the cross and the blood of redemption; who rejected with indignation the need of vicarious atonement; with pride and pain of daily culture built up for themselves a character of the best among men—these shall take part in the second resurrection and the second death; these shall pass through the gates of judgment and go forth as eternal ghosts.

But what an awakening! without spiritual life, without knowledge of God and Christ, shorn of the bodies upon which they lavished time and care, forever separated from God in Christ who alone could give them the apocalypse of spiritual knowledge and character and the glory and might of resplendent immortality!

In that wide, measureless sweep of eternity they will learn that natural goodness is as far from spirituality as death is from life. They will learn, some of them, alas, too late, that destruction of the soul in hell is not the coveted boon of annihilation their teachers held out to them; and with an intensity that eternity will only

serve to emphasize many will learn that the mission of Christ in this world was not to make men moral but spiritual and immortal; and in that helpless state they will realize that the men who in the name of Christ preached natural righteousness, natural morality, denied an immortal body for Christ and immortal bodies for Christians, making the hereafter both a myth and a mist, were nothing less than robbers both of God and man, robbers, pillagers and spoilers of the soul, robbing it, pillaging it and spoiling it of all hope and happiness forever.

And now the supremely important question, the one that outranks all others is this:

*"Where and how will you spend your eternity?"*

It is not a question of how long you will live in this world, how well you can live, how much you can get out of life; it is not the question of houses, nor lands, nor gold, nor even friends—the supreme question is—"*Where and how are you going to spend your eternity?*"

You *can* live a *moral* life here.

If you are not going to be a genuine Christian, by all means set up the best moral standard you can find and direct your life according to that. It will make life more comfortable for you here. The man who is morally clean and decent, who meets the obligations of his daily life, will get on better. It is not true, as so often repeated, that honesty is the "best policy." It is not; it is the best *principle*. The man who applies that principle in his dealings with his fellow man will have less reactions to meet. The man who does not violate the laws of his body will possess that body longer and more free of pain. The man who lives the best possible natural life



is far and away better, more successful and happier here than he who disregards these laws and gives himself up to gratifying and cultivating his sensual and immoral tendencies; but—and make no mistake about it, let it sink down into your heart as one of the eternal verities—*the best moral life you can live on this earth will not make you a Christian.*

You may live today side by side with an Englishman. You may copy his manner of dress, his speech, his peculiar accent; you may so follow English methods, manners and ways that others shall suppose you English born and bred; but in spite of all your painstaking effort and imitation though you lived a million years you would not be an Englishman. As much as you might like to do so you cannot change yourself from a native-born American to an Englishman.

So is the relation of the best moral man to a Christian.

You may copy the Christian life. You may do outwardly all that the best Christian may do, you may do those things even better than he; but though you lived a million years and practised this imitation every day it would not make you a Christian; no moral act of your own can ever make you a Christian.

A Christian according to the New Testament model is one who owns God's estimate of him as a lost sinner, helpless and hopeless in himself; owns Jesus Christ as the Son of God and God the Son, the only redeemer and saviour of man, confesses Him as his sacrifice for sin, his personal substitute under judgment of sin; owns Him as risen and seated at the right hand of the Majesty

on high; worships Him as Thomas did, falling at His feet and saying, "*My Lord and my God.*" A Christian is one who has received Christ, not only as He hung upon the cross, not only as He is seated in Heaven, but who through faith and the operation of the Spirit has received Him into his life, into his personal experience, until it can be truly said, Christ is *in him*, "the hope of glory"; a Christian in short is one who is *in Christ* and who has *Christ in him*.

If you do not turn from your own righteousness, your own self-satisfaction, and accept Jesus Christ as the Scriptures in their unity and the Gospel in its grace present Him, you are not only not a Christian, but actually, *not even moral in God's sight*.

He who hears the Gospel and hesitates to accept the Christ as it offers Him to faith, violates the Gospel, not only as the testimony of God, but as the law and commandment of God for this age; for, while you are invited to receive the Gospel you are also, and at the same time, *commanded* to believe it for the obedience of faith; as it is written:

"Now unto him that is of power to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret since the world began,

"But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the *obedience of faith.*"

No matter though you were white as a lily before you heard the Gospel, the moment you hear it

and reject it you commit the sin of disbelief, *the sin for which Christ did not die and the sin from which even the omnipotent God is powerless to save you*; for—let the truth take hold of your mind and heart—the one supreme issue of this age is not the *sin question*.

The issue of sin between you and God has been settled long ago on the cross. God has brought in the whole world as guilty before Him and gone into judgment concerning it on the cross. That cross was the scene of a judicial action on the part of a holy God against a rebel and sinful world. On that cross you behold God executing judgment in the outpour of His wrath against sin. Because of this judicial action and because the death of Christ was a penal death, a representative penal death on behalf of man considered as man, the judgment due the whole world has been held back. A parenthesis of pure grace has come in. On the basis of this executive judgment and because of the stay in proceedings secured thereby God has concluded all under sin that He might have mercy upon all, forgive and save all who should believe.

That He might apply the saving value of the cross on the same terms to all He treats all, whether moral or immoral, in the same class, as sinners. Nor is this merely a legal and judicial fiction enabling Him thereby to act without respect to persons, grant absolution to all and upon equal terms to all. It is an indisputable fact that all have sinned. In the whole range of human kind there is not an exception. There is none who has **not** sinned; as it is written:

“There is no man that sinneth not.”

Even those who go about doing good are not free from sin; as it is written:

"For there is not a just man upon earth, that *doeth good and sinneth not*" (Ecclesiastes 7:20).

There are none righteous.

"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one" (Romans 3:10).

Even the best righteousness we can bring before God is no better than filthy rags; as it is written:

"We are *all* as an *unclean* thing, and all *our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.*"

But God measures sin not merely as a positive, but negative fact; not merely by what men *do* and *fail* to do, but by what they fail *to be*, by their *state* and *condition* as well as action; as it is written:

"All have sinned and *come short of the glory of God.*"

The glory of God is His holiness; as it is written:

"Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? who is like *thee, glorious in holiness?*"

Those who would come before the Lord and be acceptable unto Him must recognize His demand of holiness; for it is written:

"Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the Lord in *the beauty of holiness.*"

The throne of God is the throne of His holiness; as it is written:

"God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness."

Without holiness it is impossible to be saved; as it is written:

"Follow peace with all men, and *holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.*"

The holiness of God is the standard by which He measures human beings.

No one has measured up to His holiness, His perfection of being and character.

All have come short of it.

Say nothing about what you do or have done.

Say nothing about any sin you may have committed, **great or little.**

Say everything you like and all that others can say in behalf of the good you have done and the fine and helpful character which your daily life reveals—*you have come short of the holiness of God.*

You do not measure up to God's standard.

You may measure up to your own and to that of **your neighbor.**

You do not measure up to God's standard. You are **short.**

Have you any doubt about it?

Do you know any one who is as holy and perfect as God is, and must be to be acceptable to God?

You do not.

Would you dream for a moment of saying you had reached up to and were equal to the holiness of God?

You would not dare to say that.

God has said there is no difference between you (if you are the most moral person in the world) and the worst sinner on earth in respect to His holiness.

**Hear what He says:**

*"FOR THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE:*

*"For all have sinned and COME SHORT of the glory of God."*

Where is the difference between the most moral person on earth who does not believe in and accept Jesus Christ as his personal righteousness and holiness before God and the most outbreaking sinner who does not accept Him; what is the difference between them in their relation to the holiness of God?

There is none.

The moralist is short of the holiness of God.

The outbreaking sinner is short of the holiness of God.

Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.

Because the outbreaking sinner is without the holiness of God he cannot see the Lord. He cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

Because the moralist is without the holiness of God he cannot see the Lord. He cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

There is no difference between them—*BOTH ARE SHORT OF THE HOLINESS OF GOD AND BOTH ARE OUTSIDE THE KINGDOM OF GOD.*

There is a vast difference in degree between them.

The one who lives the decent, moral life, as already shown, is better off in this life than the immoral man, the outbreaking sinner; but he cannot enter the kingdom of God; above the portal of that kingdom is written in letters of light, not only that without holiness no man shall see the Lord, but these distinct and dynamic words:

*"Ye must be born again."*



"Except a man be born again, he cannot *see* the kingdom of God."

The crucified and risen Christ is offered as the righteousness of God to all—moralist and sensualist alike; for it is written:

"There is no difference":

No difference in the shortage as to God's holiness; but, likewise, no difference in the grace which offers a saving Christ to all, to moralist and to open sinner. No difference in the way of salvation. His obedience unto death on the cross may be reckoned as yours; so that you shall be owned as righteous as He is righteous and holy as He is holy before God. Risen and glorified at the right hand of God, from thence the moment you claim Him, He will not only make you legally righteous and holy before God, but cause you to be born again, giving you His own pure and holy life to be in you, the life that brings you into the kingdom of God; but if you reject, then you stand outside the gate, a poor wayfaring soul, shut outside the kingdom and glory of God even as though you were one of the worst and most outbreacking of all sinners.

"He that believeth not the Son shall not see life."

Not only that—

"The *wrath* of God abideth on him."

Faith in a crucified and risen Christ would have lifted the wrath from the sinner to the sinner's substitute.

In rejecting the substitute the wrath returns where it originally belongs on the sinner, that good and moral sinner who, nevertheless, with all his goodness is short of the glory of God; who has refused the holiness which

God out of His love and by His grace through the death of His Son had freely and fully provided for him.

"He that believeth not, shall be *damned*."

Remember it is not—he that breaks every commandment of the law; not he that commits all manner of evil until he is an outlaw among his fellow men and every hand against him, but he that "*BELIEVETH NOT*."

In some respects, as already intimated, the eternal damnation of a morally good man is even more terrific than that of an out-and-out sinner.

Which, think you, of two men suffer more in prison, the man who all his life has been accustomed to be a law-breaker; or, the high-class, refined and hitherto moral man who in an evil hour and under the most intense temptation took money intrusted to him by another for investment, was tried, found guilty and condemned?

Who feels the worse of two men, the man who has missed the necessary train by a minute, or he who missed it by ten?

Who will feel more keenly the eternal shutting out from the kingdom of God and all its privileges and joys, the man who lived so far off he never heard any of its music, had no vision of its glory; or, the man who saw through the opened gates, heard the glad songs and stood all his life almost on the threshold of it; so near he imagined he was in it, but is at the last shut out and forever?

The answer need not be long in coming.

Beyond doubt the man who all his life lived in the atmosphere of the kingdom and just missed it.

Do you remember the young man who had kept the law as he thought from his youth up? He had not com-

mitted murder. He had not been unchaste. He had not taken that which belonged to others. He had robbed no one. He had not borne false witness. He had not ruined the reputation of another by the speech of an evil and malicious tongue. He had honored his father. He had honored his mother. He went so far in his sincerity that he believed he did really love his neighbor as himself. So fine was his morality, as he thought, so exemplary his life, he could not conceive anything was wanting in his character to give him title to eternal life and membership in the kingdom.

Having recounted to the Lord the imagined perfectness of his life, with calm and unhesitating equanimity he wished to know what there was he lacked yet; what did this Jesus whom he looked upon as a pre-eminently good man think he really did lack?

It is the question thousands of moralists are asking today; more and more each day as modern preaching appeals to the innate deity of man and exhorts men to live up to their light, to develop the good in them, at the most to make the goodness of Jesus their model, they are asking what more they need than goodness; in what way and by what process can a Christian claim better title to the fellowship of God in this life and in any possible hereafter?

You will remember Jesus turned to the young man and said to him what every moralist and self-righteous person should hear with acute attention and intensely hearing ears.

This is what He said:

*"ONE THING THOU LACKEST."*

With all his goodness there was one thing lacking; one thing lacking which would give him title to life and entrance into the kingdom.

Measuring up to the standard of the law as he seemed to do—in *one thing he was short*.

There was one thing he lacked.

*He lacked Jesus Himself.*

It is true, in bidding the young man to sell all he had and give to the poor, Jesus was testing him on the side of the law which demanded that he who should attempt to keep it must love his neighbor as himself.

It is true, in refusing to allow the young man to call him "good," saying there was but one who was good, even God, and then bidding him turn away from all material dependence, reckon his own character incomplete and follow Him, Jesus was absolutely proclaiming Himself to be God and was thus testing the young man on the other side of the law, the side which demanded that those who should attempt to keep it should love God with all their mind and heart and soul and strength.

It is true, in refusing to part with his possessions and give them to another; in refusing to reckon his character incomplete and follow Jesus, the young man finally demonstrated he had not actually kept the law either toward God or man.

But while all this is true and is in itself a marvellous and dramatic demonstration by the Son of God of the inability of any man, naturally, to keep even the law of Sinai, the supreme truth is, the Son of God here makes manifest in authoritative, headquarters and final way that the most perfect moral character has no title to

eternal life and the kingdom; that after the most perfect character has been maintained there is one essential and necessary thing lacking, and that one and necessary thing is—Jesus Himself; that He is the way, the truth and the life and no one can come to God the Father but by and through Him; that what every soul of man needs who would have eternal life and enter the kingdom is—*Jesus Himself*; Jesus in all He claimed to be, Jesus in all He expected to be and, therefore, Jesus as He is today—the crucified Christ, the atoning Christ, the risen and ascended Christ, the Christ who is the one and only redeemer and saviour for man—Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever.

The young man went away exceedingly sorrowful.

He rejected his opportunity.

The most sorrowful of all who are finally lost will be the one who lived the perfect earthly life, turned away from the redeeming, saving and faithful Son of God and awoke to find himself shut out from hope forever.

Today, I assure you, the Devil is using modern preaching of a certain sort to do more harm than open infidelity, deceiving them with that counterfeit Christianity which bids them follow the example of an earthly Christ, leads them to imagine divinity in them and that it needs only to be developed by this exalted example of goodness and righteousness. I assure you those most in peril of damnation today are those who are deceiving themselves as did the Jews in Paul's time, going about to establish their own righteousness and refusing to submit themselves to the righteousness of God which is none

other than Christ who is "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

From all this it is evident the one issue of the hour between God and man is not the sin question.

No! the one and only issue, the one and only question is—

*The Son question.*

Our Lord Himself inaugurated it.

He said:

"What think ye of Christ, whose Son is he?"

Through the Gospel God the Father is asking that question today.

"What think you of Christ? Is he my Son?"

It is not what you *do* will save or destroy you forever—it is what you *think*.

If you think rightly you shall have eternal life *and* immortality.

If you do not think as God would have you think you shall never see life, the life which is in Christ. You shall never be immortal.

If you think of Christ as God thinks of Him and as He puts His thought about Him in the Gospel you are saved now and safe forever.

If you do not think of Jesus Christ as God thinks of Him, your thought and God's thought, your mind and God's mind are antagonistic and, unless you repent and change your mind, you are lost forever; for, it is written:

"He that believeth not is condemned already *because* he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

If you die that is not the end of it.



Be not deceived in thinking there is an intermediate state of unconsciousness till the final judgment hour.

The Son of God has taken away all such illusion.

In the story of the Rich man and Lazarus He has drawn aside the veil and shown us that those who die out of Christ today and descend into the prison house of the dead learn with a terrible awakening that sensation in final terms resides, *not in the body, but in the soul*.

There they learn what it will be to be disembodied out of Christ forever, and why the lost are always seeking to get back and to possess once more a human body.

Here they learn the secret of demonology and why the evil spirits cried out to the Lord, "Hast thou come to torment us *before the time?*"

We are told why the evil spirit in the man of Gadara cried out, "I adjure thee by God that thou torment me not."

We are told he cried out in this fashion because the Lord had said, "Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit." Disembodiment out of Christ is torment; and those in the prison house of the lost know what is in store for them at the second resurrection and in the second death. They know it means *eternal disembodiment*, the overthrow of all hope of immortality, all hope of living again in their own proper body, final and eternal separation from a human body; hence this formidable and fearful cry of the spirits—

"Hast thou come to torment us *before the time?*"

Every moment therefore that you are out of Christ and Christ is out of you, you are in danger.

Do not meet the gravest issue of your existence with unworthy objections.

Do not, I pray and beseech you, reject Christ your only Saviour because you cannot understand the mystery of incarnation nor fit it to your methods of reasoning. You might as well refuse the light of day because you do not understand the chemistry of the sun. You might as well refuse to add a column of figures because you do not understand, because no man does or ever will understand, why two and two make four and can only at best accept it as a working mathematical hypothesis.

Believe in the Son of God, receive Him into your life, and then with Christ in you, God's love playing like invisible fingers upon the chords of your soul, you will come to see that incarnation is in the nature of things the most practical and necessary fact in the universe, the one and only way to bring God and man together. You will come to see that it is not only the most spiritual, but the most appealingly intellectual and logical proposition ever presented to the mind of man.

Do not object to God's Christ because you cannot (you say) understand how the innocent can suffer for the guilty. Look at the history of the world and you will see from the beginning how the innocent have always suffered for the guilty. Look at the facts and you will find every human being carries disease, suffers more or less pain and dies at last because he has inherited these conditions and this climax from those who went before irrespective of any action of his own—and he never so innocent. Stop for a moment, think quickly, let it be deeply, and you will see you are condemned and lost today on the self-evident principle of "the one for the many." One man's act whatever it may have been finds its culmination

in you. Since it is indisputably "the one for the many" by which you are lost it is of the simplest logic and a demonstrable fact that you may be saved and must be saved on the same unfailing and workable principle—even "the one for the many."

Do not risk eternal banishment from God, from Christ and the hope of immortality by stumbling over inconsistent Christians. You might as well refuse to receive a piece of gold bearing the stamp of the United States mint because evil men had produced a skilful counterfeit of it and passed it as current coin. If you despise a hypocrite, then accept Christ who is by no means a hypocrite and let Him make you such pure gold, such genuine coin of the spiritual realm, that hypocrites will be rebuked and put to shame.

Do not speak of a more convenient season. A more convenient season than *now* never comes.

Do not allow yourself to be deceived with your own self-deception in fabricating the thought of "plenty of time yet." Time does not belong to you. "Now" is the only thing that is yours. Yesterday has gone, tomorrow may never come, the "now" is swiftly slipping at this very moment under your feet and going away from you with every beat of your heart.

You cannot escape your personal responsibility.

You cannot escape your responsibility for yourself.

You cannot escape your responsibility to others.

*"For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself."*

Your example is potent for good or ill.

By your open confession of Christ you will be repu-

diating all confidence in yourself. You will be taking away from those who are in the habit of looking upon you as a moral person and, so long as you did not confess Christ as your saviour, considering your example safe enough to follow, all further excuse for rejecting Christ.

It is a great thing to be a guide to lead men in the right way.

There can be nothing nobler than by your open and frank confession of Christ and faithful following of Him to lead men in the way everlasting.

It is a fearful thing to be lost yourself.

It will be still more terrible by your example, by your carelessness and indifference to lead others to follow you to eternal doom.

Let me appeal to you to take your opportunity.

The day of grace is closing.

The sorrows of the world are gathering.

The judgments so long time warned are coming.

The Almighty has a controversy with the nations and the Lord Himself is at hand.

Take the supreme opportunity of the age.

Learn once for all that Christ did not come into the world to make you moral, but something more, something far beyond that. Learn that He came to make you spiritual, fill you with His own life, clothe you with an immortal body like His own and at last permit you to dwell in this earth made beautiful, worthwhile, forever.

I exhort you to believe and receive the crucified, the risen, the ascended and coming Lord as your personal saviour and then with every genuine believer you may say with all full assurance as written in Holy Scripture:

“Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, *not according to our works*, but according to his *own purpose* and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus *before the world began*;

“But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath *abolished death*, and hath brought life *and* immortality to light through the gospel.”

What do you say?

Will you be a believer?

Will you have “*this life*” and—*IMMORTALITY?*

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